

mount that what Taiwan desperately needs to restore the cross-strait balance and regain the ability to defend its own airspace is new fighter aircraft to bolster an air force that is borderline obsolete.

It is my understanding that the administration may favor selling Taiwan upgrade kits for its existing fleet of F-16 A/Bs, instead of selling Taiwan brand new fighters. Such a tradeoff will not enhance the security of Taiwan. What Taiwan's air force needs is new F-16s and the ability to deploy them in sufficient numbers to strengthen its defensive posture. Simply upgrading airframes that are more than 20 years old is not a solution—it is nothing more than a public relations Band-Aid. Efforts to upgrade Taiwan's air fleet have to be coupled with the sale of new aircraft that can serve for two decades or more into the future.

Another important consideration is the shrinking time window for this purchase. The continuing production of new F-16s is dependent on foreign sales. It is my understanding that, if no new overseas orders are secured this year, the thousands of U.S. suppliers who help build the F-16 will begin shuttering that capability. Once this happens, it will be very difficult and expensive to restart the supply chain. Washington has a longstanding habit of putting off difficult decisions, but the decision on whether to sell new F-16s to Taiwan is literally now or never.

As the DIA report made clear, the majority of Taiwan's 400 fighter aircraft need to be retired or upgraded. Within the next 5 years, Taiwan will have to mothball or scrap more than 100 combat aircraft—one-quarter of its current force. Without the ability to augment its air force with new F-16 aircraft, as well as updates to its existing fleet, Taiwan will lose all ability to project a defensive umbrella over the island. The repercussions of a rising and potentially aggressive China, able to dominate the airspace over Taiwan, demands the attention of our military planners, government officials, and Members of Congress because it opens the door for China to use force against Taiwan. To that end, I was proud to recently join with 43 of my Senate colleagues in sending a letter to President Obama urging him to act swiftly to provide Taiwan with the F-16s that are critical to preserving Taiwan's self-defense capabilities.

It is time to recommit ourselves to strengthening the ties that bind the U.S. and Taiwan together—from arms sales to free-trade agreements. Doing so will promote peace and stability in the region, while also protecting U.S. and Taiwanese security interests. I urge President Obama and his administration to move quickly and work with Taiwan to notify the sale of these fighter jets to Congress.

NEVER TO FORGET

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last week Senator COCHRAN, Senator GRASSLEY,

Senator SHELBY, and I travelled to Flanders Field, the American Cemetery and Memorial in Belgium. We visited the cemetery on the eve of Memorial Day to take part in a ceremony honoring Americans who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

The U.S. Ambassador to Belgium, Howard W. Gutman, shared an extraordinary poem he had written at the commemoration. "Never to Forget" is a tribute to those who gave their lives for our country and also a reminder that we must heed the lessons of our past to create a better future for our children.

I would like to share Ambassador Gutman's poem with my colleagues. I ask unanimous consent that a copy be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NEVER TO FORGET MEMORIAL DAY 2011

We commemorate Memorial Day never to forget.

Never to forget who they were.

Men and women of many titles.

To some they were sergeant or colonel or general;

To others they were mom or dad,

Uncle or aunt . . .

Son or daughter.

To us, they are all heroes.

We honor them all.

And we honor their parents who lost children.

We honor their children who lost parents.

As a head of one of our American Battlefield cemeteries once told me:

For those buried in his cemetery

They remain each day on active duty. . .

And on each day that we fail to remember them . . . that we fail to honor them . . . they have served a day without a mission.

Every soldier is entitled to his mission.

Here at Ardennes American Cemetery/Henrichappelle—we—Belgians and Americans, parents and children—we are that mission.

We commemorate Memorial Day never to forget.

Never to forget what they did.

Every one of them understood when they joined that the road would be rough.

They knew that this was not about television commercials boasting pressed uniforms and glistening shoes or steeds clashing on chessboards.

They knew this was not about training exercises amidst sunny days in North Carolina,

They knew instead that this was about life and death.

They knew that for every moment of thrill, there could be months of fear.

But they knew that the rest of us needed them. They knew our fellow world citizens had been victims of murder or terror.

Perhaps they knew in 1915 that the poppies and the hearts of Belgians had been trampled on the way to 9 million deaths in WWI.

Or perhaps they knew in 1944 that Max Gutman was hiding in the woods in Poland after every other Jew in his small town of Biyala Rafka had been slaughtered. Maybe they knew that his dream one day to come to America, to raise a future U.S. Ambassador to Belgium, had nearly been extinguished along

with the future for so many Poles and Catholics and Jews.

Maybe they knew in 2001 that our citizens had been the victims of terror and remained under threat.

Whenever they served, wherever they served, they knew we needed someone to help, to respond, to free, to save, to protect.

And they said, "I will."

We commemorate Memorial Day never to forget the face of evil.

We welcome all into the brotherhood of man. We will meet you far more than half way. We and our allies will send our diplomats, help feed your poor, and treat you with respect. But threaten none, harm even fewer,

We commemorate Memorial Day never to forget.

Never to forget what they died for.

Can you hear them each and every one of the 5323 buried here and the tens of thousands buried elsewhere . . .

Can you hear them?

If not, it is because you are listening with your ears.

But on Memorial Day, we listen not with our ears, but instead with our hearts.

And with our hearts we can hear them loudly and clearly.

They tell us that they lived in a country that believed in freedom and understood right from wrong.

And they tell us that they believed in service, in duty, in the mission of creating a better world.

They tell us never to forget, but certainly to move forward and build bridges where pools of hatred previously existed.

They fought and they died to move us a step closer towards the brotherhood of man. We must never use their memory as an excuse not to get there.

Thus while we can never forget, while we will never forget, we will forgive those who have followed. Where we faced each other to the death, we will walk together to rebuild a better life.

And that may be the most enduring lesson—lessons for Belgium, for Europe, for the Middle East, or for all places where tensions rooted in the mistakes or ill deeds of the past threaten the progress of the future.

The lessons are that we need not carry the blame nor clear the name of our parents and grandparents looking back.

Rather that we build a better name for our children and our grandchildren going forward. That we must use the lessons of the past to carve a better future.

We are so used to the expression "Forgive but don't forget." And of course Memorial Day proclaims that we shall never forget.

But in making sure we don't forget, sometimes we don't truly forgive.

We commemorate Memorial Day never to forget precisely so that we can forgive.

—Ambassador Howard Gutman

TRIBUTE TO RICK COCHRAN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, my fellow Members of the U.S. Senate have heard me say this before, but today I have reason to say it again: Vermonters are some of the most innovative and hardworking people in this country. The U.S. Small Business Administration recently highlighted one of these great individuals when it named Rick Cochran of the Mobile Medical International Corporation in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, as the 2011